

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.

**Rick Scott**

Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS

State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 11, 2013

Contact: Dain Weister

407-858-1429

RABIES ALERT ISSUED FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY

SANFORD – The Florida Department of Health in Seminole County is issuing a rabies alert for the Geneva area of Seminole County. The alert is in response to a bobcat which tested positive in the area during the past week; however, rabies activity has been higher than usual throughout the county since the beginning of the year.

Residents and visitors in Seminole County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population, and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Seminole County. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public. This alert should not give a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under this alert. This rabies alert is for 60 days.

An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes.

The following advice is issued:

- All pets should have current rabies immunizations.
- Secure outside garbage in covered containers to avoid attracting wild animals.
- Do not leave pet food outside. This also attracts other animals.
- Avoid contact with **all** wildlife, especially raccoons, bats, and foxes.
- For questions regarding the health of an animal, contact a veterinarian.
- Veterinarian staff and animal control staff should be alert for animals encountered with signs suspicious for rabies and use appropriate precautions, especially when working with unvaccinated animals.
- If bitten or scratched by a suspected rabid animal, wash the wound immediately with soap and water, seek medical attention, and promptly report the incident to Seminole County Animal Services at 407-665-5201.
- Rabies is preventable when treatment is provided in a timely manner.
- No animal is too young to have rabies.
- For general questions pertaining to animals, contact Seminole County Animal Control.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system that can cause paralysis and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The virus is spread through saliva, and humans may become infected through a bite wound, scratch or exposure of a fresh cut to saliva of a rabid animal. The only treatment for

Florida Department of Health in Seminole County

400 West Airport Blvd., Sanford, FL 32773

PHONE: 407-665-3000

www.seminolecohealth.com**www.FloridasHealth.com**

TWITTER: HealthyFLA

FACEBOOK: FLDepartmentofHealth

YOUTUBE: fidoh

human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure, will protect an exposed person from the disease.

For more information on rabies, visit the DOH website at doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/rabies/rabies-index.html or the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies.

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